

TOC H JOURNAL



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THREEPENCE

Toc H for New Friends

What it is

Toc H is out to win men's friendship and their service for the benefit of others. It stands always, but especially now, when values which seemed permanent are being discarded, for truth and understanding, for unselfishness and fair dealing, for individual freedom based on a practical Christian outlook on life. Toc H works under a Royal Charter granted by H.M. King George V in 1922.

How it started

It began with Talbot House (Toc H is the signaller's way of saying T.H.) opened in 1915 in the Belgian town of Poperinghe, the nearest habitable point in the Ypres Salient. Owing largely to the Rev. P. B. Clayton, an Army Chaplain in charge, it soon secured a reputation in the British Expeditionary Force as a place of friendship and cheerfulness. Many who used it found their way to the Chapel in the loft and gained fresh strength to realise that "behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the Eternal Realities."

1919 to 1939

"Tubby" Clayton and a few survivors saw the need to recapture in peace-time the spirit of comradeship in common service and sacrifice which they had learnt in war and to pass it on to a new generation. The idea spread. By 1939 Toc H was established in over 1,000 places in the United Kingdom and had forged a chain linking 500 more throughout the Empire and beyond. More than 20 hostels (called Marks) have been opened.

In War-time

Founded in one war, Toc H now serves in another. In the interval it has built up a distinctive 'family' life and a method of work. A great many of its members are on active service by land, sea and air, others in the Civil Defence services, others serving the common cause in every field. A special form of war-work is the 'Toc H Services Clubs,' of which over 350, at home and overseas, are now open. These are much more than canteens —homely places where men meet as friends.

What it means in practice

In his efforts to further the objects for which Toc H exists, each member has what is called the Toc H Compass to guide him. Its Four Points may thus be summarised:

To Think Fairly. To win a chivalry of mind, whereby he will be humble-minded in his judgment of great issues, avoiding prejudice and striving for truth.

To Love Widely. To learn the habit of trying day by day to understand and to help all sorts and conditions of men.

To Witness Humbly. To spread the weekday Christian Gospel is the supreme object of Toc H. Every member is pledged to do his bit by carrying the contagion quietly.

To Build Bravely. (a) To be resolute in building his own life, without forgetting that what matters most is not what he can do for himself but what he can do for others. (b) To see in Toc H a bridge between himself and the lives of others, and to build it bravely.

Membership

Toc H wants men who are willing to put service before self, are trying to think fairly and are willing to offer friendship. You probably won't be asked to join, but if you feel you want to share in this great adventure, let us know. It will cost you no more than you can afford. If you would like to know more about it, ask any member you know or write to Toc H Headquarters, 47, Francis Street, London, S.W.1.

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AROUND THE MAP

The Taipo Road

A PRINTED half-yearly Report from the Toc H Kowloon Circle (Hong Kong) is most welcome. Its main items of concern are two, the death of T. C. Ellacott (announced in the May JOURNAL), a very fine character who was the inspiration of the Circle, and the making of the 'Taipo Road,' a job which he initiated and captained. The story is briefly this.

"The drive to the Rural Home and Orphanage at Taipo became a Toc H job eight months ago, when Ellacott, visiting the Home after the heavy rains, saw that its condition was desperate and unlikely to survive another season. A rainfall which sometimes exceeds 100 inches can do plenty of damage to neglected roads . . . The Taipo Home is 13 miles from Kowloon. The drive is 140 yards long, and is a motor-road. A cement gutter has been laid both sides of the road along practically its whole length; the foundation has been built up to a camber, and the surface cemented; several *mullahs* have been constructed, one passing under the road, and reinforced; and whitewashed walls and posts have been built to guide motorists passing danger-points." Friends have generously given cement, which is hard to obtain, and the boys and servants of the Home, "when they found the pink-coloured men getting down to grimy work, were not afraid to do likewise" . . . "On an average, half-a-dozen members and friends went to Taipo on each occasion. With one or two exceptions due to weather, every week-end was spent at the work during the seven months it lasted. It was Ellacott's job, inasmuch as he was its originator and unfailing fountain of enthusiasm, but the rest of the Circle, it must be allowed, turned to splendidly and at no small sacrifice of leisure put their backs into this monumental work."

The whole undertaking, carried out by a small team under an inspiring leader, reminds us of the 'Road of Loving Hearts,' which Robert Louis Stevenson built with his neighbours in Samoa. "Wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

A 'Dividend' from Shanghai

Toc H 'dividends' are many and various, but here is one unusual enough to deserve record. A year ago a refugee, a German Jewess, was taken on as 'help' in the house of a West Country member, now on service.

"She told me," he writes, "of her father 'exported' to Shanghai, to whom she sent £1 a month. He used to be a wealthy man, but is now so poor that he has to live in the Chinese quarter. I sent his name and address to Toc H Shanghai, and here is the 'dividend.' "

He encloses a letter from the lady: "Yesterday I received two postcards from my father. . . He seems to be a different person since he met Toc H people. . . They have given him moral support, new hope and confidence, and have helped him in other ways too. . . My father is full of praise of Toc H. They are the most wonderful and helpful people he has ever met, and his words are 'Whoever is connected with them cannot be bad.' After all the suffering and dreadful loneliness my father has experienced, meeting these Toc H people means heaven to my father and he is very, very grateful to you that you have written and so made the connection. . . You have helped my father an awful lot and have taken a stone from my heart."

A Voice from Peru

Let observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru.

Pope wasn't thinking of Toc H, but his exhortation ought to suit us. Toc H has touched China long since, if only on the bare fringe, but till now it has not spread northward from Chile to Peru. The chance now comes with Pat Johnston, who left the British Consulate in Valparaiso, Chile, where he did valiant work for Scouts and Toc H, for the British Consulate at Lima, Peru. He writes to Tubby at the end of April (letters take a long time to get home nowadays):—

"Yesterday I met a fellow-member in Lima for the first time, a man called Grimes, who was a Foundation Member and who knows you quite

well. It does not say much for this place that we have both been here two and a half years and have never met before! He is very keen to get a Unit started, and introduced me to a friend of his who was equally enthusiastic. We only had five minutes' talk as we met at a big show for Air Raid victims, but we promised to meet again. So that if the '*mañana*' habit does not get the better of us, you may hear great things of Lima.

"Valparaiso, I hear, is doing pretty well at the moment and Santiago is rather under the weather. Units in these parts fluctuate inevitably as men are moved about, and a very large number are going home as volunteers."

Malaya in the Picture

The Japanese adventure into Indo-China has suddenly thrown a spot-light on Malaya in the vast picture of the War. We cannot yet tell what calls there may be on Toc H there at any moment, but we do not forget that Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, not only a Vice-President but a hard-working member of Toc H wherever he may be, is Commander-in-Chief in the Far East. News from the Family in those parts is bound to be infrequent, but the typed *Monthly Notes* of Singapore Group for May are in our hands and their liveliness does not suggest death or stagnation. Here are some quotations:—

"Seletar's bi-weekly change of executive takes some following. . . Last month we broke a record when three speakers out of four let us down and the fourth put his 'date' off! Still, one evening gave the executive a chance of clearing up their work and another produced a 'hat-night,' chief feature being that the Hon. Organiser pulled a fast one and avoided his speech. It's amazing how well most chaps speak on their subjects—after they've got over the initial heart-attack. . .

"Kallang was visited by Singapore on the 21st, and, boy, are they keen! Most leading lights come from India with plenty of the right spirit, and their attack on jobs is in the typical R.A.F. style. . . Recently a group of stalwarts accomplished our best job since the formation of the Talbot House Club by getting a dark-room put up at the Orthopaedic Hospital. This will save the doctor much valuable time and the Hospital quids, for hitherto X-ray plates have been developed commercially. The appeal for a separate subscription was answered jolly well, but we are still a bit short, and, in case we've missed anyone—can we beg, cajole, exhort, demand or otherwise obtain money from you? Thanks awfully! . . . Talking of money, capitation fees are due, you know, mostly overdue, so dive into your pockets again, please. Incidentally, if you think you're not getting value for money, come and tell us, we'll fix you. We may 'tap' you like rubber trees, but there is this to be said: no income-tax in Malaya is at 19/- in the £—yet."

Toc H in a Troopship

We can follow up the article under this heading in the August JOURNAL with two more instances of 'temporary units' during the voyage. In a letter to the Editor, headed 'Somewhere on the High Seas' twelve members write as follows:—

"This comes to you from a few members of Toc H in various military units who find themselves journeying together in H.M. Transport 'X.' During the voyage we have held several informal meetings and believe that those at home will be glad to hear that we are thinking of them and of the work they are carrying on in our old Areas. Greetings and well wishes to all members from J. H. BARKER (Hucknall), RALPH COLLISON (East London Area), K. DAY (Yatton), B. DYKES (Corsham, Wilts.), R. A. HILL (Presteyn), R. H. HUDSON (Worsley), DAVID JENNER (Mark VI, Birmingham), C. R. LOWIN (Dunton Green, Kent), RON MOXON (Richmond, Yorks), RON WEBBER (Slough), A. WILSON (Bradford), G. W. MARKHAM, C.F. (Bishop Auckland)."

And here is another instance. This time the evidence is two dignified printed cards, with the embossed house-flag of a famous shipping line, giving the list of members and guests present at two Toc H meetings on board H.M. Transport *Cameronia*, "somewhere at sea," on two dates in June. At the first a Lt.-Colonel was in the chair and the members present represented units in Aden (3), Malta, Uganda and on board H.M.S. *Warspite*, *Hotspur* and *Diamond*. The second card bears the names of 30 officers and men, with home addresses all over England, Scotland and Wales.

Allies in Iceland

As everyone knows American troops are gradually taking over from British in occupied Iceland. Toc H, which hopes to 'stay put' there is already making new friends in consequence. Alec Churcher sends home a long report, received in mid-August, from which we are able to quote.

He discusses possible changes in the House in Reykjavik, in order to meet the new situation. He gives some facts and figures about the House, which is now, he says, 'playing to capacity.'

"It is now more often than not uncomfortably overcrowded. Up to July 25, 3,050 men have signed the Visitors' Book. This number includes men



"THE SUMMER IS OVER AND DONE"

(Photo: E. S. Tompkins.)

and some officers of all three fighting services. Home addresses of all visitors are recorded." These include not only men from all parts of Great Britain but a good many Canadians and "odd visitors from Australia, New Zealand, Holland, Spain, France and Belgium. Recently there have been a number of American visitors."

A 'Club Membership' scheme is in operation, by which some 400 men, paying 1 *krona* a month, enjoy certain small privileges. These men, though constantly moving and changing, form a sort of 'hard core': they enrol "more often with the idea of helping along the work than of securing very nominal benefits."

Besides two privates in the Pioneer Corps attached to the Club for duty ("both extremely satisfactory"), there is a rota of 'amateurs' who man the canteen counter—our own members and probationers or 'regular' visitors.

The activities are manifold, and we have already touched on them in the JOURNAL.

An average of 20-30 attend the Play-reading and Literary Society on Sundays; attendance at the Musical Society's fortnightly concerts has had to be limited by ticket to 40; the Toc H meeting on Tuesdays brings in 30-40 to discuss 'Britain

After the War'; the Male Voice Choir is still rather small, the Icelandic Class limited to 30, and the Sketching Club musters 8 or 9 and works out-of-doors on Sunday afternoons, weather permitting. A Concert Party, the 'Tic Tocs,' rehearses in the House and broadcasts once a month from the Reykjavik station. There is a Library of over 500 books, and Toc H now has its own magazine, *Northern Light*, from which a quotation appeared in the July JOURNAL. A leaflet, 'What is Toc H?', is being translated into Icelandic for the benefit of friendly Icelanders.

A note on the Chapel appeared in last month's JOURNAL. We are now able to give a picture of it, which Alec has sent, which gives an idea of a very original and attractive little 'Upper Room.' The troops are making gifts towards the cost of its furnishing and these already include a dollar from two American sailors. Besides regular Communion services, Anglican and Free Church, it is "always open for private prayer and is certainly used."



The Upper Room, Talbot House, Reykjavik.

Alec sends a separate report on his contact with American troops, which is getting under way. He adds this story:

An American marine stood in the middle of Borg Square, the heart of the Icelandic metropolis, and surveyed the scene. Finally he pushed his hat to the back of his head, evacuated his chewing-gum to the side of his cheek, and addressed a little knot of Icelanders standing near-by, "Say, can any of youse guys direct me to the nearest town round here?"

(By a pleasant coincidence, the writing of these notes on Alec's report—in a Services Club at home—were interrupted by a gunner who walked in on leave from Iceland. He produced a Club membership card of Talbot House, Reykjavik, and, without any prompting at all, confirmed in detail all the best impressions of Toc H in Iceland which had reached us already. It is "different," he said, because it does so much more than "feed the body"—Ed.)

Ingenuity

Peterborough Branch, in sending in the contents of one particular War Chest box, say that they "are mainly proceeds from the sale of empty tobacco tins and waste paper"; the boxholder "has devoted a considerable amount of time in sorting and packing them." As a result the sum of £1 17s. 8d. reaches H.Q.

The proprietor of a hotel in Helston, Cornwall, has designed and constructed a clock which plays a part of the Helston 'Furry Dance' tune; and visitors are allowed to inspect the works—at the price of a contribution to the Toc H War Services Fund.

Gallantry under Fire

DOUGLAS VOSPER, chairman of Saltash Branch, has been awarded the British Empire Medal and the Bronze Medal, the Scout decoration for gallantry, for his work during a severe air raid on Plymouth. As Scoutmaster of a troop manning an A.F.S. trailer pump he led his crew through a terrible night, in which H.E. was dropped almost on the fire-fighters, causing casualties, one fatal.

A Cairo job for Refugees

We quote from a cutting out of an illustrated paper from Egypt:—

"Under a system arranged by the British Consulate-General in Cairo, British refugees reaching Cairo from the Balkans and other war zones are met and helped by an organisation staffed mainly



by R.A.F. sergeant-pilots on extended sick or 'crash' leave. The organisation, operating from Talbot House (Toc H) in Cairo, meets refugees at the railway, finds accommodation for them, regularly inspects pensions offering accommodation, and aids the refugees when they go on from Egypt. Falling to the airmen, who are recruited from Hurricane House, are such tasks as acting as godfathers at baptisms, choosing toys at department stores when parents are too busy, distributing clothing to refugees, settling disputes, domestic and international, and entertaining feminine refugees. All the work is voluntary. In the adjoining picture, two sergeant-pilots are offering expert advice on visas."

THE SERVICE OF YOUTH

I.—A Toc H Opportunity

At the invitation of the Editor two West Country members contribute the following article. They are the Rev. G. A. B. JONES (District Padre, North Devon), who is the Toc H representative on the Devon County Youth Committee, and R. W. ('PETER') PITMAN (Langport and Huish Episcopi Branch), leader of the local Youth Club in Somerset.

IN serving as a member of a County Youth Committee and as a Youth Club Leader, we have continually found Toc H methods in our minds, and Toc H phrases on our lips. We feel that Toc H has a great contribution to make to the Service of Youth, and that *now* is the time to begin making it. We must get in at the foundations and watch every brick and tile of the building. Out of our experiences we offer the following for your consideration, and action.

The Motive of Service

The man who would build a house first draws the plans. The man who would start a movement must first see where it will lead. And in any movement it is the motive behind that matters most of all.

We have in this country to-day rapidly increasing numbers of Youth Clubs of one kind and another. The Service of Youth, sponsored and financially assisted by the government, is spreading into every corner of the country. And the motive behind it? Mixed, nebulous, variable, but generally to produce good citizens. Some clubs will have high ideals, others will have none. Some will deal with the whole man, others be content with providing for his bodily amusement. In many any mention of spiritual matters will be prefaced by an apology.

And here we perceive one of the greatest opportunities ever to come the way of Toc H. Briefly put, it is to provide a motive. We do not believe, and no Toc H man believes, that good citizens can be made by a course of bodily activities and mental training. Behind it all and through it all must run the force of the Spirit, guiding and directing. There is dynamite in this Youth Service, the dynamite of youthful energy, and dynamite misdirected is dangerous material.

What Toc H can offer

The adolescent needs a hero to worship, and prefers to live dangerously. Have we not the greatest answer to these needs? At a recent Youth Conference a Professor of Psychology described the Christian faith as the perfect answer to all the fundamental needs of the adolescent. But the government cannot in present conditions act as a missionary body. And the Churches have somewhat blunted their swords in their denominational differences. We have, therefore, as a family, a unique opportunity of doing what we exist to do. In this connection it should be remembered that 'humble' witnessing is neither shamefaced nor apologetic witnessing. Let the witnessing be strong, and be humble in yourselves.

Moreover we have other gifts to offer. The Youth Club should be a family. We can tell Youth a good deal about family life. We have learnt much about finding the highest common factor of a group, about the need for fairmindedness if we are to find fellowship, and about the folly of neutrality and appeasement.

Then there are Youth Service Squads. We can offer the fruits of experience here too. We know that men grow under a load; we know that freedom is the opportunity to serve, and that license is the use of freedom for oneself. We have learnt that the leisure of to-day is because of the service of yesterday, and that it is only when we give service in days of leisure that we can preserve leisure days.

How to set about it

And how to set about one task? We offer you our ideas of what a Youth Club should provide and what its aims should be. Discuss them, revise, recast, recreate them. Only make them very clear in your minds. Find

the motive for the work—shall we say the points of Toc H Compass? Having done this you are fit for the fray. Now do something.

By hook or by crook (or both) get on to your local Youth Council. Insist on Toc H representation. Offer your services as helpers and leaders of clubs or sections. You will almost certainly be welcomed, for help is scarce. When you are in, your clear ideas will be clutched at like straws by the well-meaning but often rather muddle-headed folk around you. In season and out of season work like the devil, only harder. (We said work, not talk). Be fairminded, understanding, and patient. Take one step at a time, and always in the right direction, and ensure that you do not take it alone. Be prepared for shocks and surprises, and disappointments. Be prepared to make enemies. Offer no appeasement.

" You have no enemies, you say?
Alas, my friend, the boast is poor.
He who has mingled in the fray
Of duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes.
If you have none,
Small is the work that you have done.
You've hit no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
You've never turned the wrong to right,
You've been a coward in the fight."

Be a Toc H 5th Columnist—only show your colours sometimes.

And please don't have any preconceived ideas about how Youth is to worship, or how it is to find religious expression. Did not David dance before the Ark when young?

II.—The Older to the Younger

And the following comes from Scotland. It is the text of a letter, written at the request of the Scottish Co-ordinating Committee, by DONALD MACINTOSH in July and circulated to all Toc H units in Scotland. It is intended as a basis of discussion, and to be followed up, perhaps, by a second letter. "Meantime," says the writer, "your observations, your criticisms, destructive, constructive, and harsh, will be warmly welcomed and carefully considered."

Toc H is in the position that it does not depend upon its past accomplishments in order to justify its continued existence—a fortunate position, because it must find its justification in what it accomplishes now, and in the steps taken in the immediate future to help to attain the heights of its ideals. Each of

And if that's the way Youth feel, encourage them. And did St. Paul count it all joy that his converts went to synagogue twice per Sabbath?

Lastly we feel that it is just as important to us that Youth should dance well, as it is to them. We must strive for efficiency, because efficiency only comes of effort, and effort is spiritual discipline. If they see that what is important to them is important to us, then they'll probably see that what is important to us is important to them.

And now go to it. You will probably break your heart, and more probably your neck or your back—the need for help is enormous. Never mind—'a broken and contrite heart . . .'

For your discussion, we suggest that Youth Service should offer as a wise use of leisure :—

1. The opportunity of getting and keeping a fit body.
2. The opportunity of learning about the problems of life which lie before Youth, through lectures, debates and discussion.
3. The opportunity, under wise leadership, to practise the democratic art of self-government.
4. The opportunity of discovering, enjoying, and perhaps creating, beauty in Art, Literature, Drama and the Crafts.
5. The opportunity of developing those spiritual qualities without which civilised free life cannot exist.

* * * *

The aims of Youth Club members should be :—

1. To live fully, remembering the threefold nature of man.
2. To serve our day and generation.
3. To carry on the British tradition.
4. To see visions and to dream dreams.
5. To serve the Maker of All Things, and Judge of All Men.

us is firmly convinced that we must find our material among the younger generations, rather than among these who, now with conscientious pride, call themselves veterans, however young their spirit. In other words, our primary business is with the youth, not only of our land and empire, but of the world; for

Toc H knows no boundary of mountain or sea, of race, or colour, or creed. Our field is the world, and our aspirations, therefore, universal.

In approaching the problem of "Toc H and Youth," it is well to remember that though Toc H is sufficiently balanced, and is so sure of its faith that it disowns discouragement, yet the material with which we are to co-operate is sensitive, impressionable, often suspicious of motive, and above all—malleable. The last attribute is noteworthy—youth can be moulded. And here lies the first point to be noted by us for guidance: Toc H will not succeed in moulding the mind and conduct of youth, if its men are not youthful in outlook, and share the adventuring spirit of youth. The experience behind Toc H must not so obtrude itself, that we speak as superior people who have advice to give, guidance to offer: we must join the band of youth, and go with the youth in their way. Our minds must continue to be receptive, to be delighted with discovery, to be continually and continuously travelling towards the rainbow's end.

No matter how young we feel ourselves, no matter how open our minds, how balanced our judgments, we must always be aware that, to the youth, we are of an older generation, and are therefore inclined to be stodgy and slow. But if we merge ourselves sufficiently well in youth, our age passes unnoticed, and our presence provides that feeling of dependability and assurance which youth secretly craves, though the craving be never openly shown. In other words, we must seem not to give guidance, we must just be one of the crowd. Our teaching, which we impart often

apparently casually, *must always be seen to be an integral part of our lives and every day conduct.*

But while it is pleasant and interesting to moralise on the question of our attitude to youth problems, let us consider our attitude to the existing machinery for helping the youth of our land, and let us keep in mind that the effect of our work on our youth will in time affect the youth of all lands. There are numerous voluntary organisations for youth of both sexes. The weakness up till now has been the lack of co-ordination of effort, and where there has been co-ordination it has been superficial, sometimes stiff and formal, occasionally grudging. The Government is aware of the weakness and is striving to offset it by offering schemes whereby youth organisations will enjoy a unified system of control, while at the same time preserving, each one, its own identity. But so often, identity is confused with function, and one organisation will not attempt such-and-such a scheme, because that scheme is the function of so-and-so. The looseness of co-ordination hitherto obtaining, has produced a series of almost watertight compartments in youth work, and it is this, primarily, which has caused men to be sceptical of voluntary organisations, and to advocate central control of some kind.

What is your opinion on the point? Is it that the cure comes from within the voluntary bodies, and not from without? If this is your opinion, what are you doing about it? Are you actively associated with Boys' Brigade, Scouts, Clubs, as a whole-hearted youth-minded member? If not, how do you propose to work the cure from within? . . .

Taking Time by the Forelock

A member writes: "I am tucked away in the wilds of Leicestershire, trying to be a soldier. Soon after I joined up in November I met a fellow-member of Toc H from Beaconsfield. Bob and I became great friends and, as luck would have it, we were sent here together last April. We decided to look for other Toc H men, and persuaded the Welfare Officer to put up a notice inviting men interested in Toc H to meet us one evening. Two blokes turned up, one a probationer and the other a man who has not met Toc H before. We decided to meet each week. A month or so later Bob found himself 'on draft.' But the team has gone on. We are now about a dozen strong. We have formed a H.Q. in the village. We have made contact with the local Vicar, who knew Tubby in the days of 'Pop.' Our jobs at present are confined to helping with a Y.M.C.A. canteen in the camp and acting as stewards in the camp's quiet room. We also visit Toc H Nottingham Services' Club at the week-end, where we try to make ourselves useful behind the scenes. Paul Webb visited us a few weeks back and entrusted a Rushlight to our care. Our aim is to build Toc H in the village of —— (God knows it is needed). If we succeed . . . our stay here has not been entirely profitless."

NEWS FROM PRISON

Some Postcards in Reply

A 'CIRCULAR' letter written by the Editor on February 22 to all our members known at that time to be prisoners of war is beginning to bring in welcome answers. Three postcards, written in May, and early in June, from Stalag XX A (at Thorn in Poland) reached H.Q. late in July. James Birley, of Coulsden Branch, says:—

"There is much scope for Toc H here, though I've not met many members. There are none here now, though I've quite a lot of potential ones."

This is puzzling, since our lists show well over a dozen members in Stalag XX A, and almost by the same post as Birley's we received postcards from A. H. Cox, of Rushden Group, and Mark Pope, of Hawkhurst Branch ("It cheered me up tremendously to hear Toc H is still carrying on with the good work"), both from this camp.

The Group at Oflag VII C

A postcard of special interest comes from Oflag VII C, the officers' camp in which three of our staff men, Bonham Carter, Reg Staton and Hugh Pilcher, were formerly imprisoned. During their time there they formed a Group of Toc H, which they handed over in good going order when they were transferred to IIlag XIII. We now have, for the first time, a nominal roll of Oflag VII C Group, closely written on a postcard, dated June 24, by Dan Oliver, the present Secretary:—

"Thanks for letter. So glad to hear from H.Q. The Group still meets here regularly. Numbers are small but good. Several members left for other camps. Old members are Lt.-Col. D. FRAZER (General Branch), Lt.-Col. J. E. MACARTNEY (General Branch), Major W. F. ANDERSON (Richmond), Rev. F. S. GORDON-FRASER (Nairn), Capt. G. S. TROWER (Eastbourne), 2nd-Lieut. J. E. TANNER (Kingsbridge), Capt. A. M. S. COOMBE-TENNANT (General Branch) and myself (2nd-Lieut. D. OLIVER, Croydon Branch). Members elected here and initiated: Capt. J. TOWLER, Lieut. A. LYON, Rev. G. C. McCUTCHEON, 2nd-Lieut. J. PEARSON, 2nd-Lieut. G. MEEK. Have had two JOURNALS from Dawson-Moray in Montreux, bless him, so have news of All Hallows, etc. Sorry we lost Reg (Staton) and others, but are trying to keep the Light burning. Best wishes and prayers for all at home. Yours, DAN OLIVER."

The election of new members is splendid news. (For Dawson-Moray see next page).

A Group in a 'Reprisal' Camp

Some of the members who, as Oliver says, "left for other camps," were transferred to special sections of men's camps, Stalag XX A and Stalag XXI D (from which reports of shocking conditions were received), by way of 'reprisal' for the alleged ill-treatment of German officer prisoners in Canada. 300 British officers were thus treated, and among them Lt.-Col. F. J. Morris, Chairman, and 2nd-Lieut. H. Jackson, Secretary of the Group in Oflag VII C, who are now, as a letter quoted below shows, at another camp.

Meanwhile, they carried Toc H with them, and Jackson wrote to the Editor from Stalag XX A on April 16:—

"There are five of us here who are members of Toc H. Four of us were initiated at VII C/H, whilst Reg Staton and Hugh Pilcher were there. We have had two moves since then and are now at Camp XX A. We have started a Toc H Group here and held our first meeting on Sunday afternoon, twelve fellows attending. We are going to hold weekly meetings, and for a few weeks some of us are going to give talks about our jobs. It is difficult in a place like this to find jobs of service to do, but we can try, individually, to carry about the spirit of Toc H as embodied in the Four Points of our Compass. I should be pleased if you could tell me if it is possible for us to be recognised officially as a Group."

The 'reprisal' camps are now closed and their population removed to normal conditions. The spirit in which they faced their punishment is seen in a letter we have received from the mother of an officer (not a member of Toc H) in Stalag XXI D:—

"To give you an idea of how light-heartedly they faced things, here is a description of a 'race meeting' they ran on the roof of the fort, steeple-chases over the *glacis* and flat races round it—a glorious, uproarious affair. Bookies, Tote, tipsters, nigger minstrels, course police who had fights with tonglis, etc., and one 'leading lady,' an officer in the Cameronians! The German Commandant came and entered into the spirit of it—a delightful afternoon!"

The Group at Oflag V B

This postcard was followed a week later by an air-mail letter to the Editor from another camp, Oflag V B at Biberach, announcing the formation of a Group there and giving a list of its members. The writer is Lt.-Col. F. J. Morris and the letter is as follows:—

"Dear Barclay Baron,—I am sure you will be interested to hear of the doings of Toc H in prison camps. We started a Group in VII C/H, where Col. Holland was Chairman and I followed him, until I was moved to Poland, when we started again at Fort XV. I was moved from there and have now started a Group here, which I would like you to have recognised at H.Q. I give the names of members below.

"I know of three Groups in Prisoners-of-War Camps—VII C/H, VII D, V B. I met Reg Staton, Bonham-Carter and Hugh Pilcher at VII C/H before they were moved, and all did good work. Col. Holland is now at VII D.

"Our work consists of helping at entertainments, lectures and helping others by fellowship. We meet each Sunday at 2.30 p.m., and have an average attendance of 15. We are all very cheerful and in good spirits, and often think of Toc H at home. I am starting a probationers' class. We hope to hear from you soon and send our warmest greetings. Best wishes to you all, yours sincerely, F. J. MORRIS (332), Lt.-Col. LICHFIELD, Maj. DEIGHTON (1556), Maj. TOPHAM (257), Capt. EVERE (1561), Capt. SEWELL (330), Lt. R. O. SMITH (1125), Lt. A. G. MORRIS (128), Lt. NOEL GARDINER, N.Z. (203), Lt. N. TAIT (1080), Lt. MOULDER (942), Lt. SEARLE (1564), 2nd-Lieut. DRURY (252), 2nd-Lieut. H. JACKSON (940), 2nd Lieut. REASON-CHALLINOR.

News from Switzerland

H.Q. has received a letter from Edon B. Dawson-Moray, to whom Dan Oliver refers in the postcard already quoted. He gives news of some of our prisoners of war in Germany to whom he has been writing and sending parcels, and also of four of our members in Switzerland who, though not technically 'prisoners of war,' are unable to get away and are virtually interned for 'duration.' These are Padre GEORGE MOORE ('Skipper,' of All Hallows' staff), who was in Switzerland for his health at the outbreak of war, and is now living at Blonay, by the Lake of Geneva; himself, E. B. DAWSON-MORAY, at Chillon College, Glion-sur-Montreux; Padre HOLMAN, at Berne; and BILL BARTON, late of Brighton Branch. DAWSON-MORAY writes:—

"I hear quite regularly from Reg Staton, who in his last letter, dated June 24, writes:

'The weather has changed now and we are in for a spot of good sunshine. It is good to hear news of George Moore and his new piano-accordion. . . I am keeping very fit, but long for the time when we can renew the fellowship of sight and hand.'

"I have managed to send some parcels and books to Reg. . . I have had a good many requests for copies of the JOURNAL; my copies have been sent to Reg and also to Dan Oliver in Oflag VII C. . . The chief snag is that ordinary mail

takes two or three months to reach here, though Air Mail takes a fortnight. . . A little while ago we sent greetings to all our Toc H prisoners in Germany. So far we have heard from Colonel Holland in Oflag VII D, who writes:

'I and others of Toc H here much appreciated the greetings from you fellows in Switzerland, which reached me in your letter of June 4. It is very good of you to send things, but we are at present well off for food parcels, clothing, books, etc., and going strong and in good heart. Thank you for the offer all the same. Our news of Swiss conditions from the German papers makes us appreciate the offer all the more. . . '

(He also quotes from a reply from Sgt. Percival Bacon, in Stalag XX A). His letter ends: "We hear that there is a good possibility of about 11,000 badly wounded British prisoners being sent to this district from Germany. So we are hoping for the opportunity of doing a little for them, if the Swiss allow it."

A Letter to the 'Journal'

Here is a letter to the JOURNAL from J. D. Chew, (Biggleswade Branch), a private in the R.A.S.C. imprisoned in Stalag XXI D. The letter, with the German postmark of July 8, was received by the Editor on July 30; it is closely written on the regulation single sheet in very small block capitals:—

"DEAR SIR,—As it is now well over a year since I reported to the Family of Toc H, I ask for the opportunity, through the pages of the JOURNAL, to write of my welfare and to express thanks to those who have so kindly written, and to those many friends in the Family who made my lot brighter while in training, before moving to France. It has been a joy to receive from the boys in Switzerland a very cheerful letter that included a list of Toc H 'Kriegsgefangen,' in a similar boat to myself. To the members of my home Branch at Biggleswade (Beds.) I send special thanks for their many letters and for the many happy memories and for strength through their prayers. There are other Branches, too—Bedford, Bury St. Edmunds and Colchester—my thanks for kindness while with them.

"To most of us, happy past memories have given the background for our lives during those moments when the future has seemed so dark with clouds. But now that it is well over a year since we entered this experience of being prisoners of war, looking back over the time, we find that our conditions and spirits have improved a hundredfold. Our limited camp enclosure has become our world, and in our community we have learnt something more of 'living together in love and joy and peace.' We have not even needed to introduce 'income-tax' in our simplified life! Through the great help of the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A. we have been able to develop our social life well. I wonder how much of the Toc H theme is running through our social events, when I mention our educational lectures on motor-engineering, first aid and German (I believe it will be

necessary to introduce 'Improve your English' before returning!). Debates have been successful—such as 'Is woman's place in the home?' (Are those big Canadians away yet?). Our 'Stalag Band' is now in good form, with its subsidiary 'Swing Band,' for dancing and jazz. At our concerts and Sunday services our 'Choir' is in fine fettle, and our week-end football has extended well into the cricket season, with the introduction, now that the warmer weather is here, of swimming in the river near. Even with these and many other events to fill our evenings when our day's work is done, we always feel that gap, that ever-open wound, of long separation from all we love. Many times do we have to remember again the Toc H Prayer of 'disowning discouragement,' and when despondent moments come we are trying to put up a defence of 'high-hearted happiness' that even imprisonment cannot pierce. Though separated from you all for a while, may we all continue 'to work for His Kingdom in the wills of men.'

"For all those of 'the Family' at this end,
Yours in Toc H,
J. D. CHEW, Pte."

Letters from Staff men

Glimpses of our five H.Q. men in the civilian internment camp, II lag XIII, in South-Western Germany, continue to arrive in fair quantity. Here are a few extracts:—

B. H. BONHAM-CARTER TO HIS FATHER.

Letter dated March 26: "Thanks so much for personal clothing parcel. . . Also Toc H : Greenacre's Christmas Card, Dallas Ralph's and Lake Lake's letters, both of December. No recent letters. To-day we were privileged to hear German version of 'News' by broadcast in English. Most illuminating presentation. We hope the entertainment may be continued. . . Life continues normal course. Successive visits (of) interested Americans (are) apparently unable (to) improve sanitary conditions. . . Parcels from Portugal continue to arrive weekly and (are) much appreciated. Wish tobacco from Home could follow suit. We buy some smoke, but hardly up to our standard. . ."

Letter dated May 19: "Toc H had arranged . . . dispatch from Lisbon of half-kilo parcels. These are most regular and welcome. . . We don't want this supply to fail. . . We got some English tobacco thence last week. Lovely. . . Weather here is improving. Trees coming out. Cold winds retard growth on this hill-top. Many improvements have taken place here, mostly during this last week. We are hoping for more walks outside. . . I'm perfectly fit and flourishing. To-morrow's the anniversary of my capture. Time passes!"

Letter dated June 16: "Red Cross food and cigarette parcels have been arriving one a week for the last four weeks."

Letter dated June 23: "Food parcels still arriving well." He mentions that they have been planting gardens, and hopes that some re-arrangement of the Camp may be made. Apparently all ages and classes are mixed up together, so that it is comfortless for all.

Letter dated June 25: He speaks of going out for a walk, collecting pea-sticks for the garden. The weather has been fine for a week.

Letter dated June 30: He reports that he is running a Hindustani class for four men, all keen. Also that they were rehearsing *The Bells*, and that they had had another walk, but that it was a bit hot.

Letter dated July 14: He mentions that he has been elected 'room-captain' and enjoys additional responsibility. He says the inhabitants of the room are taking kindly to mild discipline, where none existed before.

REG STATION TO PADRE H. F. SAWBRIDGE.

Letter dated June 9: "Victoria's news" (i.e. news of H.Q., 47, Francis Street) "is encouraging and I hope to hear more about her in the future. Poor dear is so busy on war-work that when you see her give her my love, and any message she has could be sent through you. The news from my friends in the old Area is grand. . . Hearing so often seems to shorten the distance. . . We are all very well, thank you. . ."

Letter dated July 9: Reg reports that he "has taken up football seriously. . . I took the goal for the team who called themselves 'Never-played-here-before.' It ended in a draw, but that wasn't my fault: I'm told I did stop two getting through. The joke of the game was on me. At the close, one bright seaman, on hearing I hadn't played for 33 years, said 'Gosh, that's years before I was a twinkle in my father's eye!'"

HUGH PILCHER TO PADRE PAUL WEBB.

Postcard dated June 21: "After 13 months' captivity am very fit. Have not regained the lost 3½-stone in weight, nor the 12-inches loss of girth. Red Cross parcels coming in much better—very welcome. . . Arstin Williams is a tower of strength: has developed enormously since the Lille days; he will go far. Bonham-Carter is also a tower of strength, and will be a great power in Toc H after the war."

REX CALKIN TO PADRE H. LEGGATE.

Postcard dated June 11: "Extremely grateful to you for letters of March 4 to II lag VIII" (to which they were reported, erroneously, to have been transferred—see May JOURNAL) "and of December 17 to Reg, also for Francis Scott's of May 2, all a great delight to us. Grieved to hear from Mark Robinson, Santiago, of Bob Cave's death" (see November, 1940, JOURNAL). "No parcels for a month from, and no replies at all to letters to, Godfrey Pope" (a member living in Portugal). "Six *Penguins*, possibly sent by Barkis, arrived but not allowed" (they were sent long before the ban on *Penguins*—see May JOURNAL). . . "We have you all constantly in our thoughts."

Postcard dated July 14: "Please assure Barkis and Paul (Slessor) that again on June 16 Olida Berat wrote me that all was well with House; René better but not entirely recovered from stroke. All fit and send greetings."

(See note on p. 143 about the evidence for the survival or destruction of Talbot House, Poperinghe).

List of our Prisoners

From time to time we have printed in this JOURNAL the names, prison numbers and camps of Toc H members who are prisoners of war, as they have come to hand. It is, of course, well over a year since nearly all of these were captured, but we cannot, unfortunately, suppose the list of names to be complete. Various details about a number of those notified are also missing, and any further information would be welcomed by the Editor. We now print the whole list, as we have it at present. It amounts to 97 members, of whom one is imprisoned in Italy. Of this total 37 are imprisoned in officers' camps or *Oflags* (5 Colonels, 3 Majors, 5 Captains, 8 Lieutenants, 9 2nd-Lieutenants and 7 Chaplains). Of the others 53 are imprisoned in men's camps or *Stalags* (1 Quartermaster-Sergeant, 8 Sergeants, 2 Corporals, 6 Lance-Corporals, 23 Privates and 12 whose rank is unknown). There are also 8 civilians (including 5 members of our Staff) imprisoned in internment camps or *Ilags*.

2nd-Lieut. J. P. ADCOCK (Market Harborough Branch), No. 186, Oflag IX A.

Sgtm. H. R. ANDERSON, No. 948, Stalag XVIII A.
Major W. F. ANDERSON (Richmond Branch), Oflag VII C.

Gunner J. F. ARCHER (Stony Stratford Branch), Stalag XX A.

Sergt. P. BACON, No. 20382, Stalag XX A.

Pte. Jack BAPLE, No. 4093, Stalag XXI B.

L/Cpl. G. J. BARCLAY (Inverness Group), No. 1852, Stalag IX C.

Lieut. R. D. BARNES, R.N. (General Branch), Stalag X B—Marlag.

Sergt. R. J. BEAL (Ilkeston Group), Stalag XX A.

Sergt. J. A. BIRLEY (Coulson Branch), No. 18637, Stalag XX A (176).

B. H. BONHAM-CARTER (H.Q. Staff), No. 214, Ilag XIII.

R. R. CALKIN (H.Q. Staff), No. 17894, Ilag XIII.

Rev. E. V. CAVE, C.F. (Northern Area Member), No. 228, Oflag VII D.

Pte. T. E. CHEESEMAN (High Brooms Group), No. 1266, Stalag XXI D.

Pte. J. D. CHEW (Biggleswade Branch), No. 3847, Stalag XXI B.H.

Rev. S. E. COLE, C.F. (Ashington Branch), No. 1460, Oflag VII D.

Capt. A. H. S. COOMBE-TENNANT (General Branch), Oflag VII C.

Pte. G. COPLAND (Thornton Heath Branch), No. 14281, Stalag XX A (107).

Pte. A. H. COX (Rushden Group), No. 10085, Stalag XX A (148).

Pte. D. R. M. DAY (Braunstone Branch), No. 6536, Stalag XX A (12X20).

Major DEIGHTON, No. 1556, Oflag V B.
G. DERBYSHIRE (Liverpool), Stalag XX A.
2nd-Lieut. DRURY, No. 252, Oflag V B.
L/Cpl. E. R. EDWARDS (High Brooms Group), No. 14548, Stalag XX B.
Pte. A. ELLENDER (Croydon Branch), details lacking.

Sergt. L. E. ENGLAND, Stalag IX C.
Capt. EVERE, No. 1561, Oflag V B.
Cpl. E. FAUER (Huddersfield Branch), No. 1426, Stalag IX C.

Lt.-Col. D. FRAZER (General and Services Branch), No. 409, Oflag VII C.
P. FRENCH (Charleroi Branch), No. 505, Ilag VIII.

Lieut. N. GARDINER, Oflag V B.
Pte. A. F. GIBBS (Sydenham and Bellingham Branch), No. 30958, Stalag IX C.

Rev. F. S. GORDON-FRASER, C.F. (Nairn Group), Oflag VII C.

S. GRAY (Larbert Group), details lacking.

Pte. D. J. M. GRIFFITHS (Acocks Green Branch), No. 14829, Stalag VII B.

Pte. S. G. HALSE (Richmond Branch), No. 16836, Stalag VIII B.

P. HARTLEY (Charleroi Branch), No. 590, Ilag VIII.

C. HATT (Charleroi Branch), first interned at Huy, Belgium, now believed to be in an Ilag.

G. HATTON (Paignton Branch), No. 2403, Stalag XXI B.

L/Cpl. F. HAYNES (Northampton Branch), No. 12066, Stalag XX B.

Col. R. T. HOLLAND (late Chairman, E. Dorset District), Oflag VII D.

L/Cpl. C. HOLMES (Culham Branch), No. 14933, Stalag VIII B.

2nd-Lieut. H. JACKSON, No. 940, formerly Oflag VII C/H, transferred as 'reprisal' to Stalag XX A, now in Oflag V B.

J. JARVIE (Larbert Group), details lacking.

A. JEYES (Birmingham), Stalag XX A.

Pte. J. JONES (Thornton Heath Branch), No. 14285, Stalag XX A (3A).

Pte. W. KIRKPATRICK (Mark I, London), No. 6989, Stalag XXI B/H.

Cpl. E. W. LAWSON (late Brotton Group), No. 3587, Stalag XXI B.

Lieut.-Col. LICHFIELD, Oflag V B.

Pte. E. LOVESY (Stony Stratford Branch), No. 11082, Stalag XX B.

Lieut. A. LYON, elected in Oflag VII C.

Lieut.-Col. J. E. MACARTNEY (General Branch), Oflag VII C.

Rev. G. C. McCUTCHEON, C.F., elected in Oflag VII C.

Rev. MCINTYRE, C.F. (Hucknall Group), formerly in Oflag III A, transferred as 'reprisal' to Stalag XX A (5), camp now unknown.

C.Q.M. Sergt. J. MARSLAND (Halifax Branch), No. 16096, Stalag XX B.

Sergt. R. V. MAYO (Dowlais Group), No. 20552, Stalag XX A.

2nd-Lieut. G. MEEK, elected in Oflag VII C.

Lieut. A. G. MORRIS, Oflag V B.

Lieut.-Col. F. J. MORRIS (General Branch), No. 332, formerly in Oflag VII C, transferred as 'reprisal' to Stalag XX A (5), now in Oflag V B.

Rev. H. MORTON, C.F., details lacking.

Lieut. MOULDER, No. 942, Oflag V B.
 C. D. NOAKES (Battle Branch), No. 10537, Stalag XX A.
 2nd-Lieut. D. OLIVER (Croydon Branch), No. 1246, Oflag VII C/H.
 Sergt. F. A. O'MALLEY, R.A.F., No. 341, Stalag Luft (Uffz. und Mannschaften).
 2nd-Lieut. J. PEARSON, elected in Oflag VII C/H.
 L/Cpl. S. PETERS (General Branch), Stalag XX A.
 GUNNER J. W. PHILLIPS (Walton Group), No. 12939, Stalag XX B.
 H. R. PILCHER (H.Q. Staff), No. 346, Ilag XIII.
 Pte. M. POPE (Hawkhurst Branch), No. 9358, Stalag XX A (8).
 2nd-Lieut. REASON-CHALLINOR, Oflag V B.
 J. RHIND (Invergordon Group), No. 15289, Stalag XX B.
 Lieut. SEARLE, No. 1564, Oflag V B.
 Capt. SEWELL, No. 330, Oflag V B.
 W. SHARPIN (Great Yarmouth Branch), No. 17259, Stalag VIII B.
 J. SMITH (Larbert Group), details lacking.
 Lieut. R. O. SMITH, No. 1125, Oflag V B.
 R. H. STATION (H.Q. Staff), No. 370, Ilag XIII.
 Sergt.-Observer F. A. STONE, R.A.F (Quarndon Group), No. 196, Stalag Luft G.R.II 417 (Uffz. und Mannschaften).
 Lieut. N. TAIT, No. 1080, Oflag V B.
 2nd-Lieut. J. E. TANNER (Kingsbridge Branch), Oflag VII C.

THE ELDER

BENNETT.—On May 29, RICHARD GEDDES BENNETT, aged 34, after a long illness borne with great courage, a member of Rugby Branch. Elected 20.1.'26.

BRINKWORTH.—On March 20, as the result of an accident, Gunner JACK BRINKWORTH, aged 22, a member of Exeter Branch. Elected 14.5.'36.

GEORGE.—On June 22, Rev. E. T. GEORGE, C.F., formerly Padre of Tunstall Group and of Congleton Branch. Elected 5.12.'33.

GREGORY.—On July 10, JOHN LEWIS GREGORY, aged 58, a member of Wellington (Som.) Branch. Elected 1.11.'29.

HAWKINS.—On June 20, JESSE ANDREW ("Buller") HAWKINS, Chairman of Gravesend Branch. Elected 20.1.'32.

HAYSTON.—On August 16, on active service in Ireland, Pilot-Officer THOMAS L. HAYSTON, R.A.F., a Northern Area member.

LEA.—On July 16, as the result of a flying accident in Canada, Flight-Lieut. PHINEAS JOHN LEA, R.A.F., a member and hosteller of Mark I Branch, London.

Fusilier T. W. TATE (Ashington Branch), No. 16623, Stalag XX A (100).
 Pte. W. THOMPSON (South Shields Branch), No. 3230, Stalag XXI (B2—A1).
 Major TOPHAM, No. 257, Oflag V B.
 Capt. J. TOWLER, elected in Oflag VII C.
 L/Cpl. H. TOWNSON (Kendal Branch), No. 16713, Stalag VIII B.
 Capt. G. S. TROWER (Eastbourne Branch), Oflag VII C.
 Pte. J. L. WALLS (High Brooms Group), No. 1780, Stalag XX A (7).
 Pte. J. WATKINS (General Branch), No. 18839, Stalag XX A (2A).
 Bdr. L. WEBB, No. 18371, Stalag XX A.
 Dr. A. WATSON (Builder, W. London Area).
 Pte. W. T. WHEATON (Brixham Group), No. 19742, Stalag XX A (3).
 Rev. S. A. WILLIAMS (H.Q. Staff), No. 17895, Ilag XIII.
 2nd-Lieut. H. WILSON (Northern Area), No. 1548, Oflag VII C/H.
 H. WINFIELD (Mortlake Branch), No. 17020, Stalag VIII B.
 Rev. R. S. WINGFIELD DIGBY, C.F. (Rugby Branch), No. 680, Oflag VII C/H.
 A. C. YIEND (Winchcombe Group), No. 16560, Stalag XX A.

IN ITALY.

Pte. R. W. LYSONS (Stratford-on-Avon Branch), Campo Concentramento, Fonte d'Amore, Sulmona, Aquila.

BRETHREN

NIX.—On July 31, after long illness, SIDNEY NIX, a member of Rossendale Group. Elected 9.10.'36.

POOK.—Killed in an air-raid on London, May 10, RALPH POOK, a member of Highgate Branch.

SEMMENS.—Killed in action in H.M.S. Bonaventure on March 31, HAROLD WILLIAM FRIMLEY SEMMENS, R.N. Elected 12.9.'40.

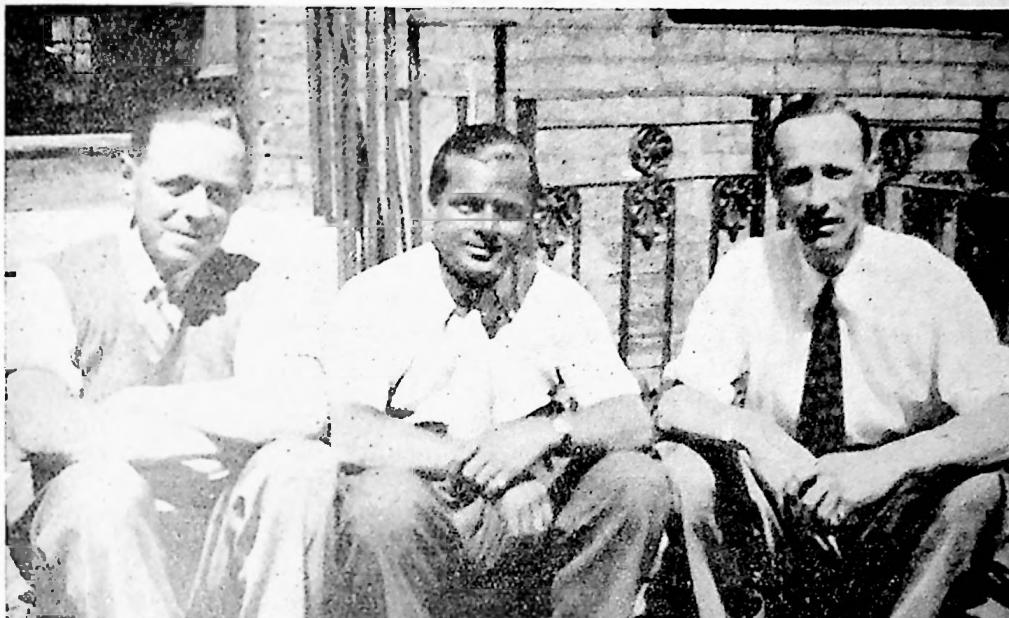
SWANN.—Killed in action in July, Flight-Lieut. G. TEMPLER SWANN, R.A.F.V.R.

TYNDALE-BISCOE.—On June 13, Commander E. C. TYNDALE-BISCOE, R.N.

VAUGHAN.—Killed on active service on August 7, L.A.C. DENNIS FRANK VAUGHAN, a member of Bridgwater Branch. Elected 12.11.'35.

WILSON.—On July 11, at Perth, E. J. WILSON, late Chairman of Broadstairs and St. Peter's Branch.

WOOLNOUGH.—Killed in action on May 11, Aircraftman JOHN VINCENT WOOLNOUGH, R.A.F., aged 29, former Chairman of Lowestoft Branch. Elected 13.9.'33.



CAMBRIDGE TOC H SERVICES CLUB HAS BEEN AND GONE AND DONE IT!

Left to right: A. V. BEAN (Assistant Warden), Rev. MURRAY GAWNE (East Anglian Area Padre), HOWARD DUNNETT (Warden).

BRAVE BUILDING

Among the Elder Brethren named in the June JOURNAL we recorded the death, confirmed long afterwards, of GORDON MILROY, of Glasgow Branch, who went down with the Auxiliary Cruiser Jervis Bay in her very gallant action protecting a convoy on November 5, 1940. We have now received from ERIC C. COWELL, Regional Secretary of Auckland, New Zealand, the following account of the Toc H Group on board. We have as yet no list of its members.

WHEN the good ship H.M.S. *Jervis Bay* under the command of a fine son of Erin, Commander (acting Captain) Edward Stephen Fogarty Fegen, faced hopeless odds and gave herself and the lives of many of her gallant crew in a successful effort to save the many ships it was her duty to protect, one more worthy addition was made to the annals of our national history and another chapter added to the *Tales of Talbot House*—for a further volume of that book will surely be written.

For valour The King has made a posthumous award of the V.C. to the gallant Captain and we here, with feelings of brotherly pride, would honour the memory of those members of the Toc H Group who were on that ship and who are not numbered among the survivors.

In the JOURNAL for December, 1939, page 353, under the heading of "Brave Building" there appeared these words:—

"The undersigned" (W. E. Howes, General Branch, and Gordon Milroy, of Glasgow, both now Sub-Lieutenants), "who in peace time are members of the Merchant Service and Toc H'ers, are now on board one of the armed Merchant Cruisers, and wish to start a unit of the Family on board. We hope to have our first meeting within the next few days and need some advice as to how Toc H is run in the Service. We have the Captain's approval to carry on our suggested venture, so this evening we are going to have notices posted asking the officers and men to come along and see what this thing Toc H is. Until we hear from you we shall conduct our meetings on the 'Four Points of the Compass,' to get the ground work started before getting down to things. . . We shall do our utmost to justify our being members of Toc H."

Sub-Lieutenant Gordon Milroy was well known to all Toc H Members at Auckland and at other New Zealand ports in pre-war

days as an engineer in the *Taranaki*, and from the date of his transfer to the H.M.S. *Jervis Bay* wrote regularly to the Regional Secretary at Auckland, who also acts as Secretary of The Seamens' Job Committee. The letters received show how thoroughly these two members set about the job of forming and building up an active Toc H Group on board under the most difficult conditions. At first there were just small meetings of four original members and a few outsiders who were persuaded to come along, but soon the intriguing words on the hand-drawn notices aroused at least curiosity and it became necessary to knock two cabins into one in order that there might be a meeting place of sufficient dimensions to accommodate a "really fair crowd." The job undertaken was that of giving newspapers and magazines to lads on ships homeward bound, and, although the papers would be some weeks old, the gift of a Home paper would be most acceptable to those who had probably been away on a three or four months voyage.

The Meetings on board were run on the usual lines—"Roughly, our programme is like this: 8-8.20 a get-together till all lads come off watch; 8.20-8.30 Chairman (who changes weekly) reads an excerpt from the JOURNAL; 8.30-9 Speaker and questions; 9 p.m. 'Light' and tea and biscuits, without which a Toc H meeting is lost, as you know, follows, during which Jobbie, Pilot, Treasurer and Secretary have their say; 9.30 p.m. sees us packing up for another week. The lads we have coming along all have the Toc H spirit, which is good to see in these times. The Secretary has enrolled about a dozen as probationers."

Programmes seem to have been well planned, one item mentioned being a talk on "Toc H under the Southern Cross." The name of the Secretary is not mentioned in the letters, but W. F. Howes was Pilot, R. D. Hill (of West Ham) Jobbie, and Gordon Milroy, Treasurer.

The extensively censored letters indicate that this auxiliary cruiser had been on Atlantic convoy work for some months but had called at many ports in the Caribbean Sea, and the Toc H lone units in those parts must surely have been enriched by the contact made with those keen and alert members. One letter records—"We have helped with a job in —, which is a Navy Club which Toc H there helps to run, so some of the lads have started their service which can only be done when we are in ports. For the last couple of days we have been tracking down Toc H'ers who have let the Group that was here slip, with a view to re-forming the unit, in the first place to cater for service members and, last but not least, to try and get the lads to carry on 'the good thing thus begun.'"

There is also a reference to the Island of B—— when ten Toc H Members raised £10,000 for War Funds, with the result that the Governor applied to become a probationer. These fine lads have fully justified themselves in the eyes and understanding of the world-wide Family of Toc H, for we can well imagine just what those weekly meetings would come to mean and the contribution made to the somewhat drab existence of all on board that good ship. Many a heart was brighter and many a friendship deepened. Enquiries show that so far none of the names mentioned in the correspondence are known to be among the survivors, and these are they we would commemorate in this short record of an episode of Family life as it can be lived.

"In the sight of the unwise, they seem to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace." Peace is theirs, and we have to remember that, and it is a peace that we cannot share. To those of us who remain and who know that from loss can come gain, the words of Lincoln stand true—"We must show an increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion."

ERIC G. COWELL.

To West Indian Members

Any members of Toc H in the West Indies coming to England will like to know of the West Indies House in Liverpool, in association with the Ministry of Labour, National Service.

DOES THE OLD HOUSE STILL STAND?

A POSTCARD from Rex Calkin, from a German prison camp, quoted on page 138, raises fresh doubts as to the fate of Talbot House, Poperinghe, the birthplace of Toc H. The evidence as to its survival or destruction, so far as we yet possess it, is extremely conflicting, and members may like at this stage to see it collected. The first nine pieces of evidence refer to the month of May, 1940, when the retreat of the B.E.F. to the Channel ports was in progress; the rest are later.

Evidence of Survival

1. On May 18, B. Rogers, a gardener of the Imperial War Graves' Commission, collected the I.W.G.C. personnel in the House to await transport to the coast. They spent the whole day there; "we left Talbot House at 8 p.m. and René and Olida" (Berat, our stewards) "bade us a cheerful farewell" (see JOURNAL, August, 1940, p. 118).

2. On May 28, Sergt. J. H. Summerfield, R.A.M.C., a Toc H member, retreating with a lorry-load of wounded men from Hazebrouck, called at Talbot House. "Skindles," he writes, "was a wreck, as was most of the rest of the town. The Old House was undamaged (3 p.m.). I met René at the door, and he told me that Olida had left Pop. and that he was about to join her—precisely where I do not know" (see JOURNAL, August, 1940, p. 119).

3. On a date unspecified an Army Chaplain, retreating through Pop., says he "kept a sharp look-out for Talbot House. . . . There it was, still standing, though houses on either side had been shattered and had crumpled into ruins" (see article from the *Daily Telegraph*, quoted in JOURNAL, July, 1940, p. 100).

4. On a date unspecified ("it may have been about May 24"), Cyril Carle, late Secretary of Mark I, London, now a serving officer, retreated through Pop. He passed the Old House, after climbing over débris which partly blocked the street, and saw it apparently intact, except for broken windows, out of which the curtains were blowing in the wind. Bombardment was still going on, and he could not stop to investigate further (see JOURNAL, July, 1940, p. 100).

5. In January, 1941, a paragraph appeared in the *Evening Standard* saying that Mr. G. A. Morgan of Cricklewood "was the last Englishman to pass through Poperinghe and reach this country. . . . The Rev 'Tubby' Clayton's foundation House was still standing when Mr. Morgan left for England by way of Dunkirk." The Editor wrote to Mr. Morgan, who replied on February 1. He replied: "I kept the Cafe Bristol-Bar in Poelcapelle, where I have lived for eighteen years. My wife is Belgian, she has family living in Poperinghe. Therefore, I know Toc H House well, also most of its members. The first time I entered Poperinghe after leaving Poelcapelle I

called at Toc H House to see if there were still any Englishmen left in Poperinghe. I found it all locked up; everyone had gone."

"The second time I entered Poperinghe after returning from St. Omer it was bombed. That was on a Friday morning, market day. The first bomb fell on the market place, killing 58 and injuring 147. Our troops were using the rail-head.

"The third and last time I was in Poperinghe our troops had left, and a lot of them were stationed at Poelcapelle and West Roosebeke; some of them were billeted in my house at Poelcapelle. As I left Poperinghe for the last time Toc H House was still standing. And the bombing had ceased.

"As the Germans apparently knew every move our troops made, they were still following them up. For as I went through Elverdinghe and Boesinghe I was bombed; also they were bombing Ypres at the same time. As I reached Poelcapelle our troops had cleared out of it. Our artillery was shelling from West Roosebeke, and the German artillery was shelling from just outside Ypres.

"I then left for Dixmude, Furnes, La Panne and Dunkirk, and crossed over in June in a troopship. Therefore, I had good reason for thinking that your Toc H House at Poperinghe is still standing. And I sincerely hope it is."

The value of this evidence clearly hangs on the date of his last visit to Poperinghe. The Editor wrote again to Mr. Morgan for this and for more details, but has received no reply.

Evidence of Destruction

6. On a date said to be May 25, Capt. Burke of the 15/19 Hussars, passed through Poperinghe "with practically the very last men of the British Army to withdraw. He says the roof was off the Old House, and the houses on each side were burning" (letter to Padre Sawbridge, quoted in JOURNAL, June, 1941, p. 81).

7. On a date first thought to be "about May 24," and afterwards to be probably May 29, Sapper Charles Holman, 216 Army Field Coy., R.E., was in Poperinghe, which was being bombed. He had left Mont des Cats early that morning, marching in a column with men of various units. As they approached Poperinghe bombardment became so severe that they were told to scatter and make their way as best they could to the coast (he eventually reached Bray Dunes, east of Dunkirk). Sapper Holman, though not a member of Toc H, joined a week-end pilgrimage to Pop. before the War and knew the position of the Old House well. He found it standing when he arrived in the morning. During the afternoon he watched the bombing 'plane which shattered it. He saw a cloud of dust go up and thought the House had been hit from the front. It collapsed completely. Later, when it was quieter, Sapper Holman, with Sappers Tuck and Keen, went round and hastily searched the ruins as well as they were able. They salvaged all they could: it was very little—two brass candlesticks, two pictures, a form (presumably from the Upper Room) and some kind of 'sign' with a Toc H Lamp on it. These things they

managed to stow in the cellar of the ruined house next door, hoping they might be preserved: they chalked 'Property of Talbot House' over the cellar door with a piece of ceiling-plaster before leaving (see JOURNAL, July, 1940, p. 100). This account is the result of a letter from Padre C. W. Hutchinson, who knows Sapper Holman well, and an interview by the Editor with Sapper Holman in London).

8. A member, Staff-Sergt. L. C. Waldron, writes: "I passed through Pop. on May 28th-29th. The Old House was then still burning, and we could not stay" (see JOURNAL, August, 1941, p. 115).

9. On a date unspecified "the parents of a Toc H member, evacuating their Home in Belgium, passed through Pop. and reported having seen the House 'flat'" (JOURNAL, July, 1940, p. 100).

Hopes revived

10. A letter from René and Olida Berat written from Poperinghe on March 31 this year was received in England in June by a Liverpool member of L.W.H.: it was in answer to a letter sent to them, via the Red Cross, in July, 1940. They make no mention of Talbot House, but write from 38, Rue de l'Hôpital, the confectioner's shop on the opposite side of the street where they had friends (Talbot House is No. 35). Paul Slessor has since written to them to ask for precise information about the Old House.

11. Several references to René Berat and to the survival of Talbot House have occurred in letters of Rex Calkin from a German prison camp. At one time we supposed that René might be a fellow-prisoner; now we know that Rex has been in touch with him by correspondence. Rex writes:—

On September 23, 1940: "There are some visitors at our old House, where only a few windows were broken and the Berats are well."

On November 18, 1940: "Assure family Old House was sound up to Sept. 5."

On January 29, 1941: "The Berats wrote me on December 22. All well."

On March 17, 1941: "René Berat has had a slight stroke, leaving his left side weak; otherwise all is well."

On July 14, 1941: "Please assure Barkis and Paul that again on June 16 Olida Berat wrote me that all was well with House; René better but not entirely recovered from stroke."

There for the moment the matter rests. We now await eagerly—and may have to wait a long time—for a letter direct from the Berats in Poperinghe, giving us news of the position. All Toc H will rejoice if they are able to refute the reports from others that Talbot House was destroyed in May, 1940.

The Angelic Sportsman

*A dialogue between Myself and the Angel,
being the sad result of sleeping over John MacMurray's 'Clue to History.'*

"Heads I win, tails you lose," the Angel said.

(You know the funny mixtures in a dream).

"But, Sir," said I, "You can't call that fair play;

The game has rules that get me badly beat."

"The point is—do you want to play?"

"Yes, Sir,
But not, I think, against You."

"Well, you may
Learn much from being beaten. Now you
watch
Me catch them in the slips—"

"Yes, I'll look on—
Stand on the touch-line."

"No, my son, you won't:
You're wanted in the scrum!"

What game is this?
O dreams and drama, struggles, hesitations—
Where am I blundering, tangle-tied?
Mirrors in multiple complicate my sight.
O for a long clear quest and worthy fight!

H. B.

TOC H PUBLICATIONS

All communications regarding publications should be sent to Headquarters, Toc H,
47, Francis Street, London, S.W.1. Postage is extra on all publications unless otherwise stated.

BOOKS

- TALES OF TALBOT HOUSE. By Tubby. 1s.
PLAIN TALES FROM FLANDERS. By
Tubby. Longmans, 3s. 6d.
TOC H UNDER WEIGH. By P. W. Monie.
New Ed., Limp Linen, 1s.; 10s. per dozen.
BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS. By P. W.
Monie. Boards, 1s.
TOWARDS NEW LANDFALLS. By Hubert
Secretan. Boards, 1s.
THE SMOKING FURNACE AND THE
BURNING LAMP. Edited by Tubby.
Longmans, Paper, 2s. 6d.; Cloth, 4s.
A BIRTHDAY BOOK. Twenty-one years of
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